U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Roseburg District, Oregon

Engineering Road Improvement and Realignment

Decision Document

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U.S. Department of Interior
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SECTION 1 – THE DECISION

Decision

It is my decision to authorize the implementation of the Proposed Action Alternative as described in the Engineering Improvement and Realignment Environmental Assessment (EA) in Chapter 2, pages 6-8 (EA #OR–104–07–05). The Project Design Features that will be implemented as part of the Action Alternative are described on pages 8-11 of the Engineering Improvement and Realignment EA. These project design features have been developed into contract stipulations and will be implemented as part of the contracts to implement the project.

The Engineering Improvement and Realignment will occur on two Bureau of Land Management roads; the Hubbard Creek Road (26-7-19.1) and the Long Ranch Road (26-3-20.3) located in Upper Umpqua Fifth-Field Watershed in Sections 19 and 21; T26S, R07W; W.M. Within Hubbard Creek and Camp Creek drainages the BLM proposes to repair and/or improve 1.3 miles of the existing Hubbard Creek Road (26-7-19.1) and 0.4 miles of the existing Long Ranch Road (26-7-20.3).

Approximately 2.2 acres of conifer forest would be removed/harvested to facilitate construction activities. This project will provide approximately 83.8 MBF of merchantable timber.

This decision is subject to administrative remedy under 43 CFR § 5003.2 and 5003.3.

Updated Information

The EA described that road construction (pgs. 6-7; Chapter 2, B.1.a.) and road improvement (pg. 7; Chapter 2, B.1.b.) on the Hubbard Creek Road would include a lift of 12 inches of crushed aggregate rock. This has been updated to include only six inches of crushed rock, not 12 inches, for the road construction and road improvement on Hubbard Creek Road. The amount of rock needed for the design on the Hubbard Creek Road was reduced because a Dynamic Cone Penetrometer test was preformed which showed that six inches of crushed rock would support administrative traffic and some light log truck traffic.

This updated information has been considered but does not alter the conclusions of the analysis. The other project design features remain unchanged.

Compliance and Monitoring

Compliance with this decision will be ensured by frequent on the ground inspections by the Contracting Officer's Representative. Monitoring will be conducted as per the direction given in Appendix I of the RMP (pgs. 189-209).

SECTION 2 – THE DECISION RATIONALE

The project design features described in the EA (pgs. 8-11) will minimize soil compaction, limit erosion, protect slope stability, protect wildlife, protect air and water quality, and protect fish habitat, as well as protect other identified resource values. I have reviewed the resource information contained in the EA, which is briefly summarized in Table 1 (below), and the updated information presented in this Decision. This decision recognizes that impacts could occur to some of these resources; however, the impacts to resource values will not exceed those identified in the *Final - Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS).

Chapter 2 of the EA describes two alternatives: a "No Action" alternative and a "Proposed Action" alternative. The No Action alternative was not selected because it did not meet the objectives from page 5 of the EA to: (1) reconstruct roads [i.e., ruts, drainage features, etc.] and associated drainage features that pose a substantial risk to the aquatic environment, (2) to prioritize reconstruction based on current and potential impacts to riparian resources and the ecological value of the riparian resources affected, and (3) to give high priority to identifying and correcting road drainage problems that contribute to degrading riparian resources. In addition, the EA did not identify any impacts under the proposed action alternative that would be beyond those considered in the PRMP/EIS.

Aquatic Conservation Strategy Compliance
As discussed in the EA (pgs. 27, 61-64), the actions authorized by this decision are consistent with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) and the objectives of that strategy.

I find the Engineering Road Improvement and Realignment complies with the ACS requirements set forth in the ROD/RMP (1994) and the subsequent District Court interpretations in the Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman's Association (PCFFA) v. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), 71 F. Supp. 2d 1063, 1069 (W.D. Wash. 1999).

SECTION 3 – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

For the Engineering Improvement and Realignment EA, comments were solicited from affected tribal governments, adjacent landowners and affected State and local government agencies. No comments were received from these sources. Notification was made (February 14, 2006) to adjacent landowners. No comments were received.

During the thirty day public review period for the Engineering Improvement and Realignment EA (which closed on June 6, 2007), comments were received from one organization.

Upon reviewing the comments that were received, the following topics warrant additional clarification specific to the Engineering Improvement and Realignment project: (1) causes that led to the condition of Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch Roads, (2) an alternative to decommission the Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch Roads, and (3) Riparian Reserves.

1) Causes that led to the condition of Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch Roads:

A comment was received that asked what caused the road conditions that are being repaired through actions authorized under this decision and how will those conditions be prevented in the future.

The Hubbard Creek Road is in its current dilapidated condition due to the combination of both excessive off-highway vehicle (OHV) use and the lack of regular, routine maintenance. As stated in the EA (pg. 1), the fill in two locations on the Long Ranch Road recently failed during the 2005-2006 wet season when rain fell in record amounts during December and January in Douglas County. In addition, the fill failures on Long Ranch Road are an approved Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads (ERFO) project under the Western Federal Land Highway Division (Disaster Number: OR 2006-1BLM).

Rocking the running surface and realigning portions of the Hubbard Creek Road will prevent the deterioration of the road through excessive OHV use and will simplify the future maintenance needs of the road. Similarly, rocking and realignment of the Long Ranch Road to a more stable location will simplify the maintenance needs and should reduce the probability of future fill failures.

2) An alternative to decommission the Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch Roads:

A comment expressed concern that the EA did not consider an alternative to decommission the Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch Roads instead of rebuilding/repairing them.

These roads were not considered by the interdisciplinary team for decommissioning during the analysis because these roads will be needed for future BLM projects (e.g. Dog Bone Commercial Thinning & Density Management in 2008). In addition, there are multiple permittees with reciprocal rights-of-ways to these roads that have a vested interest in not decommissioning either the Hubbard Creek or the Long Ranch roads.

3) Riparian Reserves:

A comment was received asking how much of the project is in Riparian Reserves and if the trees removed from the Riparian Reserve will be sold commercially or used for restoration.

As stated in the EA (pg. 26), approximately 11 percent (0.2 acres) of the Hubbard Creek portion of the project (2.0 acres total size) is within the Riparian Reserve land use allocation. Since the Hubbard Creek Road right-of-way is roughly 2.00 acres in size (EA, pg. 3), approximately 0.22 acres is within the Riparian Reserve.

All trees that will be removed, including those from the Riparian Reserve for the improvement and realignment of the Hubbard Creek and Long Ranch roads will be sold in a negotiated timbersale.

The remaining comments received were general in nature and did not raise issues specific to the actions under consideration in the Engineering Improvement and Realignment EA nor how the

analysis was flawed or in error. No further comments have been received pertaining to Engineering Improvement and Realignment.

SECTION 4 – PROTEST PROCEDURES

The decision described in this document is a forest management decision and is subject to protest by the public. In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests of this decision may be filed with the authorized officer [Marci L. Todd] within 15 days of the publication date of the notice of decision/timber sale advertisement in *The News-Review*, Roseburg, Oregon.

43 CFR § 5003.3 subsection (b) states that: "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail or facsimile protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Roseburg District Office will be accepted. The protest must clearly and concisely state the reasons why the decision is believed to be in error.

Protests received more than 15 days after the publication of the notice of decision/timber sale advertisement are not timely filed and shall not be considered. Upon timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider the decision to be implemented in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available to her. The authorized officer shall, at the conclusion of her review, serve her decision in writing to the protesting party. Upon denial of a protest the authorized officer may proceed with the implementation of the decision.

For further information, contact Marci L. Todd, Field Manager, Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management, 777 NW Garden Valley Blvd; Roseburg, OR. 97470, (541) 440-4931.

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Marci L. Todd, Field Manager Date
Swiftwater Field Office

Table 1. Summary of Effects of the Action: Engineering Improvement and Realignment .

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
Cultural Resources		
Cultural Resources.	Project area was inventoried for cultural resources (March 20 , 2007) and Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act were completed, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols. No cultural or historic resources were identified (EA, pgs. 11, 31).	There will be no effect to cultural or historical resources (EA, pgs. 11, 31).
Botany & Noxious Weeds		
Federally threatened (FT) **Kincaid's lupine** and the federally endangered (FE) **rough popcorn flower**.	There is no suitable habitat for the rough popcorn flower (EA, pg. 55) and surveys were completed for Kincaid's lupine (May-June 2005 [EA, pg. 28]). No Kincaid's lupine sites were discovered (EA, pg. 28).	No impacts to these two federally listed plant species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Survey & Manage (S&M) Species.	Pre-disturbance surveys were completed from May to June 2005 in accordance with the reinstated 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2001) (EA, pg. 28). No known sites of Survey and Manage botanical species were found in the proposed Project Area (EA, pg. 28).	No impacts to survey and manage botanical species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and **Tracking (BT) Species**.	Surveys were completed (May-June 2005) and no sites were discovered (EA, pgs. 28, 55-60).	No impacts to BS, BA, or BT botanical species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Noxious weeds.	There are infestations of noxious weeds scattered throughout the project area; mostly located within road prisms (EA,	Noxious weeds currently located in the Project Area are being controlled with either the application of approved

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	pgs. 29).	herbicides, or by manual removal (USDI Roseburg District Integrated Weed Control Plan (EA, pgs. 29, 41). Project Design Features will prevent or control the spread of noxious weeds in the project area (EA, pg. 10).
Fisheries		
Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho Salmon and Chinook salmon.	The nearest EFH is 250 feet downslope of the Hubbard Creek road project and 400 feet downslope of the Long Ranch road project (EA, pg. 27).	Project will not adversely affect essential fish habitat for Chinook or Coho salmon (EA, pg. 28). Therefore, consultation with National Marine Fisheries Service is not required (EA, pg. 31).
Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and **Tracking (BT) Species**.	Oregon Coast coho salmon (BS), Oregon coast steelhead, coastal cutthroat (BT) Oregon Coast chinook salmon, Pacific lamprey (BT), and Umpqua chub (BS) are present within the Elk Creek fifth-field watershed (EA, pg. 25, 53).	The project will not alter the habitat components of large woody debris, stream temperature, fine sediment and substrate, or fish passage (stream connectivity) at the project level. Since the action will not affect fish habitat at the project level, it will not incrementally add to the cumulative effects beyond the project area. (EA, pg. 26).
Hydrology		
Stream Flow (water yield and peak flow).	This action would not affect peak flows or water yield (EA, pg. 64).	There is no effect to peak flow or water yield (EA, pg. 64).
Stream Temperature.	A small number of fir trees within the Riparian Reserve would be removed. These trees are growing on the current road bed and would not affect stream shading (EA, pg. 26).	Since stream shading will not be affected, stream temperatures will also not be affected.
Sedimentation.	The renovation on the first 0.72 miles of Hubbard Creek Road would be within the existing road prism and would not cause additional sediment delivery to the streams (EA, pg. 24).	Sediment delivery to Hubbard Creek or Camp Creek would not increase or would not increase measurably at the drainage level and therefore there would have no discernable change to water quality (EA,

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	There could be an initial increase in sediment contribution to a tributary of Camp Creek at mile 0.76 as there would be freshly exposed sediment from constructing the Hilfiker Wall on the Long Ranch Road. Less sediment delivery to Camp Creek from the slope failure would occur over time as a result of the road improvement (EA, pg. 25).	pgs. 24, 25).
Soils		
Landslides.	A landslide inventory based on aerial photos and field investigation did not reveal any landslides at Hubbard Creek Road (EA, pg. 20). The fill failures at Long Ranch Road are very steep head scarps above moderately sloping deposited material and each cover about 0.20 acres. They are still largely devoid of vegetation and are actively eroding (EA, pg. 20).	Landslides, due to the action, will not occur at Hubbard Creek Road since construction would occur on stable slopes (EA, pg. 22). At Long Ranch Road, any cutting into the cut slope could destabilize the potentially unstable slope but that would be countered by rock buttressing the cut slope. This mitigation would keep the risk of cut slope failure low (EA, pg. 22).
Soil Productivity.	There would be an expected net irretrievable loss of 0.25 acres in soil productivity for all projects combined under this action (EA, pg. 22).	The action would not change the average road density at the seventh field watershed scale and larger (EA, pg. 22).
Wildlife		
In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, **consultation** with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has been completed for the federally threatened (FT) bald eagle, northern spotted owl, and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat and murrelet critical habitat.	A Letter of Concurrence was received from the USFWS (*Reinitiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities* [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]) dated June 24, 2005 which concurred with the Roseburg District's conclusion that the activities	The USFWS concurred that this action is not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, spotted owl, spotted owl critical habitat, murrelets, or murrelet critical habitat as a result of disturbance (pgs. 14-15, 23-25, 30, [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]). Project Design Features will be implemented in compliance with the

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	are *not likely to adversely affect* Northern spotted owls or marbled murrelets as a result of disturbance (pgs. 23-25, 14-15).	letter of concurrence.
Bald Eagle.	The project area is located outside of the Umpqua River Corridor Bald Eagle Management Area and does not contain suitable nesting habitat for the bald eagle. The nearest known bald eagle nest site (Woodruff Mountain) is located approximately 4.2 miles away (EA, pg. 15).	No disturbance effects to bald eagles will occur and suitable nesting habitat will not be modified (EA, pg. 15).
Noise/Visual Disruption of Northern Spotted Owl nesting behaviors.	No noise/visual disruption effects to spotted owls will occur due to this action since there are no known spotted owl nests, activity centers, or unsurveyed suitable habitat are within 65 yards of the project area (EA, pg. 16).	No disruption effects to spotted owls will occur.
Northern Spotted Owl Habitat. There are five northern spotted owl sites that are located within 1.5 miles (Coast Range provincial home range) of the harvest units. The Camp Creek site has an established 100 acre Known Owl Activity Center (KOAC) (EA, pg. 16).	The activity on the Long Ranch Road will occur within approximately 1,300 yards of the Camp Creek owl KOAC and the activity on the Hubbard Creek Road will occur within approximately 750 yards of the same KOAC (EA, pg. 16). Both roads are located within stands of dispersal habitat for the northern spotted owl (EA, pg. 16).	The capability of the dispersal habitat to function for dispersing spotted owls would be maintained or improved (i.e. by reducing disturbance from off-highway vehicles) (EA, pg. 16). The USFWS concurs that this action is not likely to adversely affect spotted owls (pgs. 23-25, 30, [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl.	This project is not within designated critical habitat for the northern spotted owl (EA, pg. 16).	There is no effect to critical habitat for the northern spotted owl from this action.
Noise/Visual Disruption of Marbled Murrelet nesting behaviors. The project area is located approximately 35-36 miles from the coast, within Zone 2 (EA, pg. 15).	There are no known occupied murrelet sites within five miles of the proposed project area (EA, pg. 15). The activity on the Long Ranch Road	By following the daily-operating restrictions established in the Project Design features (EA, pg. 10), this action will not disrupt nesting behaviors of marbled murrelets that may be within

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	would occur within approximately 54 yards of unsurveyed, suitable marbled murrelet habitat. The activity on the Hubbard Creek Road would occur within approximately 94 yards of unsurveyed suitable habitat (EA, pg. 15).	unsurveyed, suitable habitat. The USFWS concurs that this action is not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet as a result of disturbance (pgs. 14-15, 30, [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511]).
Marbled Murrelet Habitat.	The action will not modify or remove suitable habitat (i.e. large limbs greater than 4", large crown depths, and large diameter trees) for the marbled murrelet (EA, pg. 16).	The USFWS concurs that the action is not likely to adversely affect the marbled murrelet (pg. 30, Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511).
Critical Habitat for the Marbled Murrelet.	This project is not within designated critical habitat for the marbled murrelet (EA, pg. 15).	There is no effect to critical habitat for the marbled murrelet from this action.
Survey & Manage (S&M) Species.	The project area is within the known range of two S&M species (i.e. the great grey owl and red tree vole), but there is no known habitat for either species within the project area (EA, pg. 17-18).	There are no known S&M species (e.g. nest site or known site) that would be impacted by the action (EA, pg. 17-18).
Bureau Sensitive (BS) and **Bureau Assessment** (BA) Species.	Evaluation of the remaining BS and BA wildlife species was completed in March, 2007 (EA, pgs. 44-45), and no known sites or concerns were identified.	No impacts to BS or BA wildlife species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Bureau Tracking (BT) Species.	Detections of one BT species (i.e. red tree vole) have been documented more than 220 meters from the project area (EA, pg. 18).	Districts are encouraged to collect occurrence data on BT species but they will not be considered as Special Status Species for management purposes (IM-OR-2003-054).